

# Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response Action Plan



The Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER) protects public health and the environment by providing policy, guidance and direction on the safe management of wastes; preparing for, preventing and responding to chemical and oil spills, accidents, and emergencies; enhancing homeland security; and cleaning up contaminated property and making it available for reuse. EPA carries out these missions in partnership with other Federal agencies, states, tribes, local governments, communities, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector.

Overall, the activities of the OSWER offices are guided by the EPA Strategic Plan and by the EPA Administrator's Action Plan. In particular, OSWER is guided by the Administrator's charge to us to protect human health and the environment through results and accountability, innovation and collaboration, and use of best available science. In carrying out this charge, OSWER will focus on the following priorities:

## *Restore contaminated properties to environmental and economic vitality.*

- Improve consistency, management and cost effectiveness of site cleanup, applying a One Cleanup Program approach.
- Give priority to cleanup activities that eliminate human exposure to toxic chemicals.
- Encourage the appropriate reuse and revitalization of brownfields, USTfields, Superfund sites, RCRA facilities, BRAC sites, and other federal properties.
- Ensure long-term stewardship.

## *Increase America's homeland security.*

- Increase preparedness at the local, state, and federal level.
- Enhance EPA's capability to respond under the National Response Plan.
- Improve laboratory and decontamination capacity and capability.

## *Focus regulatory efforts on risk reduction and statutory compliance.*

- Clarify and improve oil spill regulations.
- Clarify the applicability of release reporting requirements to routine agricultural operations.
- Implement the Underground Storage Tank Compliance Act of 2005.

## *Promote stewardship and resource conservation consistent with the Agency's Resource Conservation Challenge.*

- Finalize policies and regulations encouraging recycling, including clarifying the definition of solid waste.
- Promote the reduction, reuse, and recycling of both municipal and industrial wastes.

## *Encourage voluntary efforts to clean up sites.*

- Support state voluntary cleanup and brownfields programs.
- Provide tools for "good samaritans" to clean up abandoned mines and other contaminated properties.
- Promote cleanup partnerships, including the Urban Rivers restoration program.

## *Strengthen OSWER.*

- Retain and attract a talented and diverse workforce.
- Develop and implement cross-program outcome and efficiency measures.
- Improve data and information quality and accessibility.
- Strengthen partnerships with other federal agencies, states, tribes, local governments and other stakeholders.